

## **ECONOMY COMMITTEE – 13 JUNE 2023**

### **AGENDA ITEM 4 – PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – ORDER IN WHICH THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE WILL INVITE QUESTIONS BELOW RECEIVED IN WRITING IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING**

1. From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Nash
2. From Mr Wells to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Nash
3. From Mr Wells to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Nash
4. From Mr Wells to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Nash
5. From Mr Chester to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Nash

### **FULL DETAIL OF THE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED IS DETAILED BELOW**

Note, the Chair will:

- invite questions from members of the public who have submitted in writing their questions in line with the Council's Constitution;
- explain that the questions received will be answered by the Chair or other appropriate Members of the Committee
- confirm that Public Question Time allows Members of the public to ask one question at a time and that a maximum of one minute is allowed for each question.
- state that questions will be invited in the order in which they have been received and that if there is time remaining from the 15 minutes allowed for Public Question Time, questioners will be allowed to ask a supplementary question.

## **QUESTION ONE**

### **From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Nash**

The 2023 Annual Bognor Regis Town Electors meeting adopted the following Resolution:

"Urges Arun District Council to treat the proposed improvements to the Regis Centre theatre (which are not regeneration) as the first stage of a regeneration process that will take in the rest of the site. the Hothampton Car Park site and other areas (such as a new Medical Centre, The Pier and the local fishing industry) to achieve cultural, economic and social regeneration;

"Calls on Arun Council to engage with those who submitted regeneration ideas at Arun's request and others to examine their ideas and sources of inward private and other investment in this process;

"Calls on Arun Council to undertake the public consultation it promised concerning Bognor's Regeneration."

Will the Chairman undertake that the contents of the Town Electors Resolution are considered seriously by his committee?

### **Response**

Thank you for your question Mr Cosgrove, I am happy to confirm that the Council is looking at the regeneration of the environs of the Regis Centre and in addition to the theatre and proposed new hotel.

The committee will be invited in due course to consider other elements including the future use of the former pub. Regarding the other areas you mention I understand the Committee will be asked at a future meeting to confirm the geographical remit and scope (including public consultation) of any future work building upon the content of the original Bognor Regis Masterplan. The Council has engaged with those that have previously submitted ideas for regeneration and will continue to do so where appropriate.

## **QUESTION TWO**

### **From Mr Wells to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Nash**

The committee investigate what measures the council intend to take in relation to flooding from the sea on the promenade adjacent to the bandstand, if they decide to spend taxpayers' money on a proposed new café in this area prone to flooding in the winter months? I reference the Blue toilets as one example of a bad job this council has undertaken in recent years.

### **Response**

Thank you for your question Mr Wells, the advice from the Councils Senior Coastal Engineer indicates that over-washing events occur approximately once a year at this location. The risk of over-washing will be considered as part of the proposed business case appraisal, as will the requirement for any specific design and construction methods to mitigate against this.

### **QUESTION THREE**

#### **From Mr Wells to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Nash**

From the draft plans (Stalls Zone) any new café adjacent to the bandstand will overshadow a grade two listed building recently refurbished by this council and cause potential issues for future events in this area. Event space is at a premium along the seafront, please can I ask the council to reconsider the location of any new facility in this area to avoid any issues with the refurbished bandstand and events taking place within it?

#### **Response**

Thank you for your second question Mr Wells. Having taken advice from the Councils Planning department it is unlikely that a café building in position 5 of the Stalls Zone would result in overshadowing, and with no residential amenity overshadowing would not be a significant planning concern. Perhaps the greater concern is impact on the setting of the heritage asset – such impact would be assessed at the planning stage. Were an application to be submitted it would be accompanied by a heritage statement, and if harm were identified then planning officers would need to assess that harm against any public benefits arising from the proposal.

#### **QUESTION FOUR**

##### **From Mr Wells to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Nash**

The 2016 Bognor Regis Seafront Delivery Plan was carried out 7 years ago pre covid and a lot has changed with the visitor market, would this be an ideal time to review the councils plans for our whole seafront and see what new opportunities exist with attracting potential investment from the private sector?

##### **Response**

Thank you for your question Mr Wells. I am happy to report that in October this committee will be reviewing the whole seafront delivery plan and looking at how things need to be changed and how we go forward, so that work is ongoing and will form part of what we will be doing in October.

## **QUESTION FIVE**

### **From Mr Chester to the Chair of the Economy Committee, Councillor Nash**

The public consultation for the closure of Pier Rd presented options for a seasonal closure and a permanent closure, yet the option of a seasonal closure cannot be legally implemented.

Other than being necessary in order to implement a seasonal closure there appear to be few benefits of a Winter closure. I voted for a seasonal closure in the consultation, but we now know the option should not have been in there.

I would ask the Committee to think carefully about the possible negative impacts on businesses and residents of a permanent year-round closure? and consider whether a re-consultation on the actual option suggested for implementation be undertaken. This would then avoid potential challenge, as presently we don't know how many of those who supported a seasonal closure would have chosen the 'do nothing' option were permanent closure the only other option available'.

### **Response**

Thank you for your question Mr Chester. The Committee will shortly consider what stance they want to take on this matter and I am sure they will have regard to your observations.